REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed on **7 March 2008**, the Examiner reviewed claims 1-29. Examiner rejected claims 11, 22, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Examiner rejected claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on Chou et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,920,106, hereinafter "Chou"), and Beukema et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,113,995, hereinafter "Beukema").

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Examiner rejected claims 11, 22, and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicant has amended the specification to limit the computer-readable medium to tangible embodiments, thus overcoming the non-statutory subject matter rejection.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Examiner rejected claims 1-29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chou in view of Beukema. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Neither Chou nor Beukema discloses separating management communication packets into two categories based on the management class or method in which the management communication packet is generated. In addition, neither Chou nor Beukema discloses discarding the management communication packet at a switching device under based on its type.

In embodiments of the present invention, all subnet management packets (SMP) are separated into four categories **based on the management class or method in which the SMP was generated** (see instant application, page 7, ll. 13-23). These 4 categories can be further divided into two more general categories, and untrusted endnodes are only permitted to send management packets that fall in one category and receive management packets that fall in another category (see

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instant application, page 8, ll. 1-4). **The switch** in embodiments of the present invention **examines** the SMP and **discards** SMPs that are not of a permitted type (see instant application, page 8, ll. 7-11).

In contrast, Chou discloses a method for speculatively forwarding an incoming packet to multiple buffers within the port prior to determining which of the multiple buffers is the target buffer for the packet. The Chou system then decodes the packet and uses the decoded packet to determine which of the multiple buffers is actually the target buffer (see Chou, col. 2, ll. 1-7). More specifically, Chou teaches away from the present invention by **forwarding an incoming packet to** *all* **VL 15 buffers** (see Chou, col. 9, ll. 46-53). Note that as stated above, the instant application teaches a switch that examines the management packet and *discards the packet that is not a permitted type*, whereas the switch in Chou system *forwards the packet to all VL 15 buffers without examination*.

In addition, Chou does not disclose separating management communication packets into two categories based on the management class or method in which the management communication packet is generated. Although Examiner avers that col. 3, line 25-col. 4, line 9, and col. 9, line 46-col. 10, line 14 of Chou disclose establishing two categories of management communications (see the Office Action, page 3, 3rd paragraph), a close examination of the cited text does not render such a conclusion. Col. 3, line 25-col. 4, line 36 of Chou merely discuss a datapath that includes data bus, request bus, and grant bus (see Chou, col. 3, ll. 25-33). In Chou's system, an arbiter receives resource request from the request bus and issues a resource grant on the grant bus (see Chou, col. 3, ll. 37-41). Note that a request in the Chou system is different from a management communication packet in embodiments of the present invention. A management communication packet in embodiments of the present invention travels on a restricted virtual lane (VL 15) (see instant application, ll. 7-8), whereas a request

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in Chou system may travel on any virtual lane depending on the output port number and an input port identifier for the request (see Chou, col. 3, ll. 41-47). Col. 9, line 46-col. 10, line 14 of Chou discloses forwarding the incoming packet to all VL packet buffers and a flow control buffer, decoding the packet, setting an indicator for each for each of the VL 15 buffers, VL 0 buffers, and the flow control buffer (see Chou, col. 9, ll. 46-61). Chou does not disclose separating management communication packets into two categories based on the management class or method in which the management communication packet is generated.

Examiner avers that Beukema discloses determining whether the first endnode is a trusted endnode and discarding the management communication if the first endnode is not a trusted endnode (see the Office Action, page 4, 1st paragraph). Applicant respectfully submits that Beukema discards a management packet based on the **mismatch between the M-Key** stored in a subnet management packet and the M-Key value stored in the system area network (SAN) component (see Beukema, col. 9, ll. 33-45), whereas in embodiment of the present invention, a management packet is discarded based on the category (type) that the packet belongs (see instant application, page 8, ll. 7-11). Beukema nowhere discloses discarding the management communication packet at a switching device based on its type.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended claims 1, 11, 12, 22, 23, and 29 to clarify that in embodiments of the present invention, management communication packets are separated into two categories based on the management class or method in which the management communication packets are generated. These amendments find support in page 7, ll. 13-23 of the instant application. No new matter has been added.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 11, 12, 22, 23, and 29 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant

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also submits that claims 2-10, which depend upon claim 1, claims 13-21, which depend upon claim 12, and claims 24-28, which depend upon claim 23, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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